



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DAVID Y. IGE
GOVERNOR

ELIZABETH A. CHAR, M.D.
DIRECTOR

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 6, 2022

22-110

Hawai'i Department of Health continues statewide campaign to reduce kupuna fall injuries

HONOLULU – The Hawai'i Department of Health (DOH) is continuing its statewide senior fall prevention awareness campaign in September with several interactive and educational opportunities for kupuna and their families. Kupuna and their families are encouraged to participate in tai chi classes, free medication reviews for kupuna, home safety workshops, and community presentations that focus on preventing falls among older adults.

"Falls are the leading cause of injury among adults 65 and older. Many falls and fall-related injuries can be prevented with existing knowledge and devices," said Dr. Alvin Bronstein, Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention Systems Branch Chief. "Seniors are our fastest growing population, and we encourage our kupuna to take advantage of these resources to prevent fall-related injuries."

Unintentional falls in Hawai'i cause 144 deaths, 2,251 hospitalizations, and 10,046 emergency room visits each year. Falls have greater impact on those older than age 65. In addition to the emotional and physical impact of falls on seniors and their caregivers, falls create a significant financial toll on families and the healthcare system; over \$223 million in hospital and physician charges resulted from 2021's fall-related injuries in Hawai'i.

Falls can also be prevented through:

- Having your doctor or pharmacist review your medications annually;
- Getting an annual eye exam;
- Getting a Personal Electronic Safety Device, especially if you live alone;
- Making your home safer by removing fall hazards especially rugs and barriers like boxes, stacks of papers, or belongings and improving lighting
- Exercising regularly to increase balance and flexibility.

The DOH and the Hawai'i Fall Prevention Consortium are sponsoring events in collaboration with The Tai Chi for Health Institute, Times and KTA Pharmacies, Hawaii State Public Libraries, and City Mill:

"Aging Isn't for the Weak" Fall Prevention Presentations

This award-winning presentation continues at various locations around O'ahu as well as six presentations at O'ahu public libraries during September. [Click here for a list of upcoming presentations.](#)

The Emergency Medical Services and Injury Prevention System Branch (EMSIPSB) schedules additional presentations based on community COVID-19 capabilities. Call 808-733-9202 for when and where the next event will be.

Medication Reviews by Times and KTA Pharmacies

Times and KTA pharmacies statewide are offering medication reviews, which are important for all kupuna that take both medications and over the counter medicine. Medicine can mix incorrectly with others and contribute to dizziness. Kupuna are encouraged to make an appointment so that the pharmacists have the appropriate time to complete the review.

Tai Chi for Arthritis/Fall Prevention Classes and Instructor Workshop

O'ahu YMCA's Tai Chi for Arthritis/Fall Prevention (TCAFP) classes are approved by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Council on Aging to improve balance. An Instructor Workshop is also being offered to re-certify in TCAFP. For information call 808-733-9202 or go to <https://health.hawaii.gov/injuryprevention/home/preventing-falls/tai-chi/>.

The Hawai'i Fall Prevention Consortium was founded in 2003 with support and leadership from the Injury Prevention and Control Program of the DOH. The consortium includes government agencies, professional associations, non-profit organizations, hospitals, care facilities and senior organizations.

#